



Congressman Tim Bishop

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BISHOP SECURES WIN(E) FOR LI VINEYARDS

Bipartisan Letter Yields Approval for Grape Research Grant

Washington, DC—Congressman Tim Bishop (D-Southampton) today announced a grant for grape research programs which help Long Island's growing wine industry has passed its biggest hurdle. The funding— \$7 million in research through Cornell University—was included in the Fiscal Year '04 Agriculture Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill. Bishop had requested the funding in a joint letter he wrote with Congressman Sherwood Boehlert (R-Utica) and which was co-signed by members of the New York congressional delegation.

"Long Island wineries have begun to take their rightful place amongst the top wineries in the nation," Bishop said. "This funding will help us pop the cork on even better wines in the seasons to come."

The bill now must be passed by the House and Senate before it is signed by President Bush. However, this provision is widely expected to remain in the bill.

If approved, the funding through Cornell would provide \$2.7 million next year for the Grape Genetics Center in Geneva, NY. The Center will conduct critical research into grape varieties, and methods for improving the yield and quality of grapes for wine through sound environmental practices. The Center will complement research already being conducted by the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station.

"This is a national center which emphasizes the importance of the entire New York wine and grape industry from Long Island to the Finger Lakes," Mark Smith, Assistant Director, New York State Agricultural Experiment Station said. "This is a statewide benefit, but it's also national in scope and the research will be helpful to the whole industry."

Because the center is located in New York, it will be able to focus on projects to improve conditions for wineries on Long Island.

"Long Island's wineries play a vital role in our regional economy," Bishop said. "I am pleased we were able to get this grant and that our wine industry is continuing to grow."

Under the bill, the Health-Based Crop Genomics Center in Ithaca, NY would receive \$4.3 million for planning and design of a lab which will be focused on plants as a source of nutrients and health promoting concepts for humans and livestock.

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